



## Institutions that Process Education Award Payments Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### My AmeriCorps – Online Payment System

#### Can multiple people at my institution access My AmeriCorps?

Yes. Your institution's Administrator may grant other employees access to your account to complete various requests. An Administrator can process all requests and an institution may designate more than one Administrator.

#### What are roles for my institution and My AmeriCorps?

An *Administrator* may grant other employees access to your account to complete various requests. An Administrator can process all requests and an institution may designate more than one Administrator.

- A *Forbearance Processor* can review and approve requests for the forbearance of qualified student loans.
- An *Interest Payment Processor* can calculate the amount of interest that accrued on a qualified student loan during a term of AmeriCorps service, or provide the daily interest rate during the period. System-generated service dates are included with all forbearance requests.
- An *Education Award-Expenses Processor* can determine the dollar amount of an Education Award to pay current educational expenses for a particular period of enrollment. This person is familiar with regulations governing the relevant types of educational expenses—Cost of Attendance for degree or certificate programs and educational expenses for non-degree or GI Bill-approved educational programs.
- An *Education Award-Loan Processor* can determine the payoff amounts for qualified student loans.

#### How will my institution know when a payment request needs action?

You can receive email notifications by email or log on to view the status of pending requests at any time. If you wish to receive email notifications, choose that option when you register on My AmeriCorps.

#### Why does the system ask for enrollment, start, and midpoint dates when I request a payment for current educational expenses?

The legislation for the National Service Trust requires that payments for current educational expenses be made at the beginning and middle of the enrollment period because it influences the eligible amount. If a payment request is received after the midpoint of the enrollment period, the entire amount will be paid.

#### How do I send payments electronically – Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs)?

The U.S. Treasury transmits Trust payments to institutions electronically through the Automated Clearing House (ACH), an electronic network for financial transactions in the U.S. With some exceptions, the U.S. Treasury requires that federal payments be disbursed electronically.

You can sign up for EFT payments by filling out Standard Form 3881, ACH VENDORMISCELLANEOUS PAYMENT ENROLLMENT FORM, and faxing it to the Trust using this secure fax number: 202-606-3484. You can obtain a copy of the form by returning to the EFT section of the web page *For Institutions*.

Once your institution is register to receive electronic payments, you will receive a notice with each payment that includes the following information:

- Where the funds came from (CNCS)
- Last name and first name initial of the member
- Amount of the payment
- Purpose of the payment (e.g., current education expenses, loan payment, interest)

#### **What security does the My AmeriCorps website have?**

In accordance with OMB and NIST guidelines, electronic signatures are allowed in a Level 2 system via verified user registration methods. OMB says level 2 systems generally contain information that, if violated, would be financially harmful to an individual and cause a small degree of financial exposure to the related agency.

We use a method that requires two separate steps. First, the user must identify him- or herself to the system using predetermined data elements. Second, the system verifies the individual's identity, and then requires him or her to establish a username and password for subsequent reentry.

#### **Will my institution have a record of requests made in the system?**

Institutions will have access to records maintained in the Trust's database. From your Homepage, you can select "Search Requests" from the left navigation bar and search and view past requests. You may print a copy of the record, if needed.

#### **If an individual has a paper "Voucher and Payment Request Form," what should I do?**

We ask that you encourage the use of My AmeriCorps. Payments can be made faster, easier, and more securely. Site registration takes less than five minutes. If online registration is not feasible, a paper Voucher and Payment Request Form or a paper Interest Payment Form can be completed and sent to the Trust for processing. All required fields must be filled in.

- The voucher is used for payments requested from an individual's education award account (to repay loans or pay for current educational expenses).
- The interest form is used for payments of the interest that accrued on qualified student while the individual was serving in an AmeriCorps program.

Send completed forms to the National Service Trust address, listed on the form.

#### **How can my institution return excess funds?**

The refund procedure is the same for both overpayments to schools (e.g., when a student drops classes) and to loan holders (e.g., when an overpayment was made for a loan).

- IF THE INSTITUTION STILL HAS THE UN-DEPOSITED U.S. TREASURY CHECK and wants to return it, send the original check to: National Service Trust Corporation for National and Community Service, 250 E Street, SW Washington, 20525

- IF THE INSTITUTION HAS DEPOSITED THE U.S. TREASURY CHECK and needs to return, either the entire amount or refund a portion of the payment, the school or loan holder can:
  - Return the funds electronically through the federal government's website "pay.gov". On this site, you can transfer funds from a bank account (ACH) or use a credit or debit card; or
  - Issue a check from the institution's account and mail it to **CNCS, National Service Trust, 250 E Street SW, Washington, D.C. 20525**
- IF THE INSTITUTION RECEIVED THE FUNDS ELECTRONICALLY and it needs to return, either the entire amount or refund a portion of the payment, the school or loan holder can:
  - Return the funds electronically through the federal government's website "pay.gov". On this site, you can transfer funds from a bank account (ACH) or use a credit or debit card; or
  - Issue a check from the institution's account and mail it to CNCS.

Some school policies prohibit electronic payments or prefer check payments. In these cases, the school can issue its own check and mail it to the National Service Trust at the address above. The recommended method for returning funds to the Trust is to use pay.gov.

#### **Can my institution return funds using a credit or debit card?**

You can use your institution's credit or debit card but you must do it through [pay.gov](https://www.pay.gov).

#### **How do my institution pay using pay.gov?**

Pay.gov is a convenient and fast way to make secure electronic payments to Federal Government Agencies. Log onto <https://www.pay.gov/>.

Follow these steps for payment:

- 1) Click on *Find an Agency* at the top of the page
- 2) Click the letter C
- 3) Click on *Corporation for National and Community Service*
- 4) In the AmeriCorps Education Award Refunds (Trust Fund) section, click *Continue to the Form*
- 5) Under Accepted Payments Methods, ► Bank Account ► Debit or Credit Cards, click *Continue to the Form*
- 6) Complete the National Service Trust Fund Refund form, using the institution's and the student's information. Click *Continue*
- 7) Complete the payment information form. Review the payment and account information and then Submit
- 8) Pay.gov gives a confirmation of payment. Print the confirmation and save for your records.